



West Des Moines Human Services 2016 Holiday Assistance Programs Frequently Asked Questions...

What should I include in my food basket?

Following are a few suggestions: turkey or ham, gravy, potatoes, vegetables, fruit, Jell-O, boxed stuffing, rice, cranberries, rolls, butter, pie and whipped cream. Additional side dishes, salads, breads or desserts are also an option. Please deliver your food basket to the family several days prior to the holiday. If delivering to WDM Human Services, please include only non-perishable food items.

May I provide a grocery gift card instead of a food basket?

Yes, please feel free to provide a gift card in lieu of a food basket. Food cards or vouchers distributed through West Des Moines Human Services are \$25 per household, regardless of family size. Please feel free to use your own discretion regarding amount if sponsoring a family and delivering directly to them.

I'm adopting a family for Christmas. May I meet the family I sponsor?

Yes, if you choose to be matched with a family, we encourage you to make direct contact with that family. **Please contact the family as soon as possible to let them know you are their sponsor.** Please inform us if you have difficulties in communicating with the family.

Is it acceptable to give my adopted family second-hand gifts?

In general, we ask that our sponsors provide new gifts for the Adopt-A-Family Program. Most of the families live on limited financial means and receive used or second-hand items throughout the year. The holidays are a time of year that children look forward to receiving new gifts to call their own. However, if you have an item in good, gently-used condition that the family is in need of, please use your own discretion in passing it on, or consider donating the item to our Clothing Closet.

When is the deadline to adopt a family?

We would like to have most "adoptions" completed by December 5th (November 11th for Thanksgiving) to ensure adequate time for sponsors to shop and prepare their packages. **However, we will continue to accept sponsors as long as we have families in need.**

How should I prepare my packages for Adopt-A-Family?

Please wrap each gift (optional) and label with the recipient's first name. If you wish to remain anonymous, you may write "from Santa" or simply leave the "from" portion off. If you are delivering your gifts to WDM Human Services, **please include the family identification number on each package.** Please place the packages in plastic bags or boxes. **In large, bold letters, please label the bags or boxes with your family's identification number.** We ask that you kindly keep your bags or boxes lightweight so that one person can easily handle them.

If I am not able to commit to adopting an entire family, may I still make a contribution?

Yes! There are many ways to help without taking on the commitment of adopting a family. Every effort makes a difference. Please consider one of the following:

- ❖ Donate a new, unwrapped toy or a teen gift/gift card for our Toyland Program
- ❖ Donate a \$25 gift card for food or gifts
- ❖ Make a monetary donation designated to our "Holiday Assistance Program"

For more information, please contact Mindy Hotovec at 515-222-3663 or Melinda.Hotovec@wdm.iowa.gov.

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